



The Right Way

H.H. the Sakya Trichen (the 41st Sakya Trizin)



"The Sakya Tradition" Publications

2022 © All Rights Reserved



This work is provided under the protection of a Creative Commons
CC—BYNC—ND (Attribution—Non—commercial—No—derivatives)
4.0 copyright. It may be copied or printed for fair
use, but only with full attributions, and not for commercial
advantage or personal compensation.

For full details, see the Creative Commons license.

Published by “The Sakya Tradition”

www.sakyatradition.org

Email: info@sakyatradition.org

Wechat ID : sakyatradition

Weibo: sakyatradition

IG: the_sakya_tradition

Facebook: TheSakya

Youtube: 萨迦传承 The Sakya Tradition

Strictly Not for Sale, Free Distribution Only

Acknowledgement

His Holiness the Sakya Trichen (the 41st Sakya Trizin) bestowed this teaching in at Kagyu Ling, United Kingdom. In 2022, this English transcript was prepared, edited, and published by The Sakya Tradition, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and making widely available the precious Dharma teachings of the glorious Sakya lineage. The text was translated into the Chinese language by The Sakya Tradition translation team. We thank everyone who has contributed one way or another in making this teaching available, connecting many to the precious Dharma in order to obtain temporary and ultimate benefits.

By the merit of this work, may His Holiness the Sakya Trichen enjoy perfect health and a very long life, and continue to turn the wheel of Dharma.

The Right Way

H.H. the Sakya Trichen (the 41st Sakya Trizin)

Published by “The Sakya Tradition”



The Right Way

As human beings we have various requirements in our daily lives, such as a place to stay, food to eat, clothes to wear, and so forth. The most important matter, however, is Dharma practice, because through it we can make our mind calmer, happier, and more peaceful.

Material objects can only meet our physical needs; for instance, to renovate a shelter and make it more comfortable or to receive medical treatment if one is physically sick. We may be able to meet our physical needs by seeking outer materials. The mind, however, is rather different. Mental problems and dissatisfactions cannot be resolved by material assistance. As we can see, many wealthy people are well equipped with external facilities, yet are more mentally unhappy than those who lack material luxuries. Mental problems can be resolved by other means—through the assistance of Dharma.

There are various types of religions in this world. Each religion has a role to play and offers ways of helping people. I am not claiming all religions are the same, but rather that all religions are relevant. Each one of us is different from another—we each have different inclinations and propensities; hence one religion is not sufficient to cater to all. In the same way, many different types of medicines are required to cure many different diseases—for example, allopathic medicine is suitable for certain diseases, Āyurveda medicine is more suitable for others, and naturopathic medicine may be the best choice to treat yet another. Likewise, for certain people, different religions may be more suitable to solve their problems.

From the perspective of the Buddha's followers, the Buddha generated the enlightened thought for the sake of all sentient beings at the very beginning. While in the meantime, through the accumulations of merit and wisdom, he completely eliminated all forms of obscurations—the obscurations of defilements and knowledge—not a single trace of propensity remained. This is the reason he perfected the accumulations of merit and wisdom, and thus obtained the great kāyas—dharmakāya, which means the ultimate reality body, and the rūpakāya, which is the highest physical form and ultimate reality, respectively. In this way, his enlightened activities do not cease.

The Buddha possesses omniscient wisdom, great compassion, and great power through his skillful means of body, speech, and mind activities. Among these activities, the foremost activity is his verbal activity, which is turning the wheel of Dharma—imparting instructions or teachings.

It is impossible for the Buddha to perform miracles to directly save ordinary beings from suffering if we do not make any effort. Buddha discovered and taught that everything that we encounter in our lives is the product of our karma. If we commit negative deeds, if we indulge in nonvirtuous deeds, if we do not follow the right path, then even a thousand buddhas who appear before us will still not be able to save us. Buddha has imparted instructions to us and described what are the right and wrong ways. Therefore, we should not follow the wrong way, but must follow the right way.

By following these instructions, we can accomplish temporary happiness as well as achieve permanent liberation and even ultimate enlightenment. As the Buddha said: “You are your own savior.” Therefore we have to follow the instructions of the Buddha’s teachings. We must make efforts to follow Buddha in our daily lives. This is the best way to save us from suffering.

Whether one is a Buddhist or non-Buddhist, believer or nonbeliever, regardless of what philosophy or ideology one is following, each and every one of us has a common goal: we all desire happiness and wish to be free from suffering. However, due to the ignorance or lack of wisdom we create more and more causes of suffering. As a result, we are caught up in saṃsāra, the circle of existence, just like a wheel that never ceases but goes on and on.

Once we are caught up in saṃsāra, we are not free from saṃsāra—the cycle continues; despite how our physical form has changed many times, the continuation of our consciousness goes on from the beginningless time until now. If we do not make efforts, we will not be liberated, we will not attain results, and so in the future we will remain in saṃsāra all the time. As long as we still remain in saṃsāra, we are subject to suffering—there is no happiness. All of saṃsāra, from the highest heavenly realm to the lowest hell realm, is pervaded with suffering. Although there seemingly appears a mixture of suffering and happiness in saṃsāra, when we carefully examine, we find there is no real happiness—it is all suffering.

No one wants to experience suffering. If we do not want suffering, we must abstain from the cause of suffering. For example, when we have fallen sick with a certain disease, it is important to receive the right medical treatment. But at the same time, it is more

important to abstain from the causes of the sickness, be it food, lifestyle, or environment. Otherwise, even if we have received the best treatment, if we have not eradicated the causes of sickness, the sickness will not be cured. Similarly, if we do not want suffering, then we must abstain from the causes of suffering.

The cause of suffering is defilements, which arise due to ignorance or lack of the wisdom of not knowing the reality. Each sentient being possesses the buddha nature, which is pure. However, we fail to realize this: instead of seeing the true nature of one's mind, one clings to it as a "self" without any logical reason. When one clings to it as a self, then one has attachment to one's own kind and anger toward others—this way, we form defilements. Defilements are like poisons; the three main poisons are ignorance, desire, and anger. From these three main poisons arise the other defilements or negative emotions, such as jealousy and pride. We react to the defilements by engaging in physical actions such as killing and stealing, verbal actions such as lying, and mental actions such as hatred. Committing these actions is like planting seeds on fertile ground, and in due cause will inevitably produce results.

Simply by praying and hoping, suffering will not disappear. To cease suffering, it can only be achieved by engaging in right conduct and virtuous deeds as well as refraining from nonvirtuous

deeds that are driven by defilements. Nonvirtuous deeds create all forms of suffering. Therefore, we must abstain from nonvirtuous deeds. Even if we believe an action is only a little bit nonvirtuous, we must abstain from it, even the tiniest deed, because a tiny spark can set a whole forest afire.

We all want happiness. To generate happiness, we must create the cause for it. Happiness is not created by an outer force. Rather, happiness is created by our virtuous actions and positive thoughts, such as loving-kindness, compassion, beneficial aspirations, and so on. We should try to practice and engage in virtuous actions as much as possible, even tiny actions, because the accumulation of drops of water can create an ocean.

To be engaged in virtues is not easy because since beginningless time we have become accustomed to defilements. In our daily life it is very easy to give rise to anger, jealousy, pride, and so on. We are aware that these emotions are very harmful and are the cause of all suffering. Yet it is very difficult for those who are accustomed to defilements to abstain from such acts. On the other hand, it is difficult for us to generate positive emotions like loving-kindness, compassion, and enlightened thoughts even when we try our best. Therefore, one should tame one's mind.

Lord Buddha and other masters have bestowed innumerable and

different levels of teachings like Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna, and Vajrayāna, many different forms of meditations, and many types of practices to us. The purpose of learning all these teachings is to tame our mind. Regardless of what practices we perform, be it listening to Dharma, contemplation or meditation of Dharma, performing Dharma as an individual or as a group, it is vital to check whether one's mind has been tamed, whether the practice is effective in subduing our mind and defilements.

Any practice that reduces our defilements is considered to be a very great and effective Dharma practice. Even the highest level of teaching may be practiced, but if it does not serve as an antidote to our defilement, it is not considered effective. Thus, to be effective, to be able to follow these very high teachings and achieve results, it is vital to build the foundation: the common and uncommon foundations.

The common foundations are the four reflections: the difficulty of obtaining a precious human life, the impermanence of life, the law of karma, and the suffering of saṃsāra. The uncommon foundations are taking refuge, creating the thought of enlightenment, Vajrasattva practice, offering the maṇḍala, and guru yoga practice. We should not only gain an intellectual understanding of these foundation practices, but also contemplate and meditate them until we have gained real inner feelings.

Foundation practices are not about counting the numbers. Although it is customary to perform each of the foundation practice for a hundred thousand times, for some people it is not necessary to reach such a high number, while for other people one hundred thousand times may not be enough and, instead, several hundred thousand may be needed. It is important for us to understand that counting is not considered important; the main goal is for our practices to be effective and to have clear signs until we have gained real inner experiences that change and transform our mind. If our mind is tamed and transformed, the practice is deemed effective.

Until we have achieved significant signs, it is important for us to continue practicing. Having built a very strong and solid foundation—and on this basis—we can pursue very “high” teachings, and we will be very successful. One may wish to pursue the highest teaching without any background and foundation, a route which may be suitable only for certain people with high capacity. When constructing a high-rise building, it must have a solid foundation, or it will collapse. Therefore, it is essential to build a strong and stable foundation. With such a foundation, we will succeed in accomplishing results.



■ His Holiness the Sakya Trichen is revered as the forty-first throne holder of the Sakya lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. Born in Tibet in 1945, His Holiness is from the noble Khön family, whose predecessors date to the early days of Tibetan history and established the Sakya order in the eleventh century. In his youth, His Holiness received intensive training in Buddhist philosophy, meditation, and ritual from eminent masters and scholars.

Widely regarded as an emanation of Mañjuśrī, His Holiness is the spiritual guide to many in the next generation of Buddhist teachers and practitioners, and has bestowed Sakya's core teaching cycle known as the Lamdre (the Path with the Result) in both eastern and western countries. His Holiness manifests profound wisdom and compassion, tirelessly working to establish monasteries, nunneries, and educational institutions and to impart the Buddha's teachings to countless students around the world.



**“The Sakya Tradition”—Delivering the
Precious Sakya Teachings Accurately
and Entirely in Your Native Languages**

www.sakyatradition.org

2022©All Rights Reserved